

VZCZCXRO0669
RR RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHMR
DE RUEHSB #0043 0130523
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 130523Z JAN 06
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9452
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 1028
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 0863
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0551
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 3423
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0861
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 1492
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUFNGNOA/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RUEHC/DEPT OF INTERIOR WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0510
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1243

UNCLAS HARARE 000043

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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AF FOR DAS T. WOODS
AF/S FOR B. NEULING
OES/IHA FOR DR. DANIEL SINGER, REBECCA DALEY
INR/GI RAYMOND LESTER
NSC FOR DNSA ABRAMS, SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE
USDOC FOR ROBERT TELCHIN
PASS USTR FOR FLORIZELLE LISER
STATE PASS USAID FOR MARJORIE COPSON

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [TBIO](#) [SENV](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [PREL](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE AVIAN FLU UPDATE

REF: A. A) HARARE 05

[1](#)B. B) 05 HARARE 1655

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: Contrary to earlier indications (Ref B), the GOZ has not yet lifted its general ban on the export of poultry and poultry products following the discovery of type H5N2 avian influenza (AI) in Zimbabwe late last year. The GOZ is investigating the phyto-sanitary capabilities of export-focused poultry farms and certifying them individually to export. Thus far three farms have met the criteria and were permitted limited exports. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has provided funding to test commercial poultry flocks throughout the country. The GOZ is seeking further funding to test chickens raised in communal areas. Partly as a result of the export ban, chickens flooded the market this holiday season, depressing prices to below the cost of production. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Director of Veterinary Services Dr. Stuart Hargreaves told EmbOff on January 10 that his office had decided not to lift the export ban on poultry and poultry products as a precaution against the spread of the non-lethal H5N2 AI strain discovered in Zimbabwe late last year (reftel). He said the GOZ is proceeding with individual certification of the phyto-sanitary abilities and expertise of poultry farms in the export business. As they meet the appropriate benchmarks, they will be certified to export. Hargreaves said three farms had thus far met the criteria and were free to export day-old chicks. He also stated that BirdLife Zimbabwe had identified wetland areas, including around Harare, for further testing and monitoring. According

to Hargreaves, the AI strain had been carried to Africa by migratory birds.

¶3. (SBU) Zimbabwe has received US\$ 33,000 from the FAO to test commercial poultry flocks throughout the country. The GOZ is seeking further funding to test chickens raised in residential and communal areas and to hire a consultant to review protocols in place and analyze data.

¶4. (SBU) Zimbabwe Poultry Association President Peter Drummond told PolOff on January 11 that the discovery of H5N2 had dashed the plans of Zimbabwe's major exporters to export a significant quantity of poultry to Namibia. The exporters had been forced to dump the meat on the local market during the holiday season, thus depressing prices below the cost of production. Drummond noted that Zimbabwe's cost of production was USD 2.00/kg and the poultry had been sold at USD1.50/kg. Nonetheless, he maintained that the industry supported Hargreaves' approach, as it would assure the foreign market of the safety of Zimbabwean poultry.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: Hargreaves' cautionary approach is a positive step towards containing the spread of AI, including non-lethal strains. However, Zimbabwe's economic meltdown has taken its toll on the country's health care system and the GOZ will require international assistance in containing any AI outbreak.

DELL